Canadian FILM WEEKLY

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OUR BUSINESS by N.A. Taylor

No Budgets—No Stars No Way

There is great stress in our business today to reduce costs in production and distribution — and in advertising, for that matter. Some exhibitors or circuits may have made uneconomical leases in recent years, but generally operating costs have been kept under reasonable control.

Until now, distribution has continued in a pattern which in many cases was antiquated and outmoded 20 years ago. But there have been many cases of horrendous waste in production. Primarily, therefore, the belt tightening must start in that area. This means less pay for stars, producers, directors and writers. Even the unions in Hollywood are today taking a hard look and preparing to discuss the elimination of feather-bedding and unreasonable rates in order to either stop "runaway" production or increase it in Hollywood.

However, when one talks about producing the hundreds of films a year which are required to keep the theatres of United States and Canada operating in a viable manner, one cannot think in terms of all these films being made with unknowns.

There must be a handle to sell any film. Sometimes it is an established property such as a play or book, perhaps even a classic. Sometimes it is the very subject such as some of the sex pictures we have been playing recently. A controversial subject based on current events may spark a box office attraction. However, in the long run, established stars, to whom the public has taken a fancy, will sell more tickets than anything else.

Thus, with rare exception, Jane Fonda in a new film will sell more tickets than Lizzie Glutz in the same vehicle. There are a great many players whose names may

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CANADIAN PICTURE PIONEERS 1970 EXECUTIVE — Left to right, back row: Jack Fitzgibbons (fund raising committee, membership co-chairman), Zeke Sheine (golf chairman), Morris Appleby (golf committee, entertainment committee), Myer Axler (fund raising committee), Dave Ongley (honorary solicitor). Middle row: Harold Pfaff (welfare committee), Bob Myers (award dinner committee), Art Bahen (fund raising co-chairman, annual meeting committee), Andy Rouse (golf committee). Front row: Don Watts (public relations), Leonard Bernstein (secretary-treasurer, membership co-chairman), A. L. (Pat) Travers (president), Lloyd Pearson (vice-president, award dinner chairman). Absent when photo was taken were Lionel Lester (award dinner committee, annual meeting committee), Harvey Harnick (fund raising co-chairman).

—Photo by Len Bishop (public relations, entertainment committee)

Universities see controversial movie

Canadian universities are having the rare opportunity to screen Jean-Luc Godard's controversial film, Sympathy For The Devil (formerly entitled One Plus One). The film, which features the British rock band, The Rolling Stones, has only been seen internationally at a few universities, festivals and clubs since its completion in 1968.

Sympathy For The Devil is a series of inspirations, immediate and improvised, and like many of the French director's previous movies, it is a plea for social change. Godard discusses class struggle and the various attitudes of our society.

Physically, the film is made up of several short, interchangeable scenes. Throughout, we watch The Rolling Stones (the voice of dissatisfied youth!) in a recording studio, working out (from an idea to the finished product) their song for change, Sympathy For The Devil. In other episodes, we are introduced to the ideals of Black Power, liberal democracy and the consumer society.

The film has not yet been released commercially, in 35 mm., because the distributors seem to have been frightened by the generally poor critical acclaim and because of the content, politically. Nevertheless, Godard devotees may feel that Sympathy For The Devil is one of the more interesting movies of this year, one of Godard's greatest triumphs in the theatre/politics of cinema, and one which might have audience drawing power because of the ever-popular ever-relevant Rolling Stones.

The film is being distributed in this country by New Cinema of Canada, based in Toronto and Montreal.

Toronto film company in mammoth program

Halewyn Films, a Toronto-based film production company manufacturing educational and documentary motion pictures, is presently engaged in one of the largest motion picture productions ever undertaken in Canada.

Its over 100 Careers Series of career counselling and vocational guidance films for the education market is a $2,000,000 two-year programme.

The Careers Series is being distributed internationally. The company has national distribution networks in Canada and the U.S. and has made export arrangements with 26 foreign countries where its films are sold.

The company has already had purchase offers from American conglomerates. One of these was a major U.S. film studio entering the educational market. No such offer has been accepted.

NFB feels that more money is needed

Last week, film-makers from the National Film Board told the Commons broadcasting committee that they had lost faith in the ability of the board's management "to act tough with anybody but us. Internally, it's an autocratic management. The film-makers spend much of their time fighting with the management rather than making films."

The NFB union delegation felt that because of the government's austerity program, the film board was falling behind the rest of the film communications industry and was losing several of its best people.

Famous Players appoints 2 new VPs

George P. Destounis, president and managing director of Famous Players Canadian Corporation, has announced the appointment of Clare S. Doidge, treasurer, and William N. Murray, general manager, as senior vice-presidents of the company. The appointments were approved at a company directors' meeting, Feb. 20.

Vixen's director honoured at Yale

An eight-picture, two-day-long Russ Meyer Film Festival, including panel discussions and seminars, was held recently under the auspices of the Yale Law School Film Society on the Yale campus. The program marks the first time that a film festival has been held at Yale since the university was founded in 1701.

Meyer, who made his reputation as a producer-director of independtly-produced, low-budget, sex-oriented motion pictures, flew to New Haven from Hollywood to address the first day festival audience on the topic, Pornography and Art, and to participate on the second day in panel discussions on Sex in American Cinema.

Joining Meyer on the Sex in American Cinema panel were the motion picture critic for the Chicago Sun-Times, a political science professor at Brooklyn College, and two spokeswomen for the women's liberation movement.

Also attending the two days of Festival activities were Dolly Read and two other stars from Beyond the Valley of the Dolls, who accompanied Meyer from Hollywood.

The Meyer films to be shown at the Yale Law School Festival were: Cherry, Harry and Raquel, Faster Pussycat, Kill, Kill!, Lorna, Finders Keepers, Lovers Weepers, Mondo Topless, Common Law Cabin, Mud Honey and Vixen.

Columbia's earnings up

Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc., of which Columbia Pictures and Screen Gems are major divisions, reports earnings for the first six months ended December 27, 1969 were $3,250,000, or .55 per share. This compares with earnings of $3,002,000 or .53 per share for the same six months of fiscal 1968. Gross income for the six-month period totalled $112,800,000, compared to $106,687,000 for the same period in the previous year.

Symposium follows Paramount screening

A capacity audience composed of over 500 students turned up at Toronto's Ontario Science Centre on Feb. 18 to take part in a symposium which followed a preview screening of Paramount's The Lawyer.

The discussions were led by a county court judge, the head of the Criminal Appeals and Special Prosecutions branch of the Ontario Department of Justice and a barrister/solicitor, and the standing-room-only audience kept the talks running well after the allocated time.

Canadian Film Festival big success in Toronto

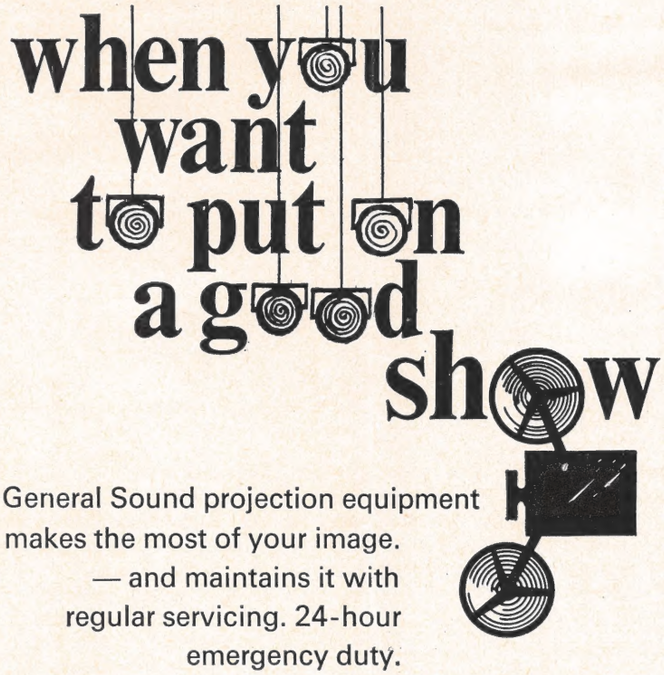
On Feb. 26, in conjunction with the opening night of the first play ever to be presented at Toronto's new St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, 5 hours of Canadian films were screened to a near capacity audience of approximately 500 in that centre's Town Hall.

The venture was a step in opening a window on another major area of Canadian artistic achievement — movies — and by the tremendously enthusiastic audience response, it was evident that the talent on display was greatly appreciated and admired.

The St. Lawrence Centre's Film Advisory Board (consisting of such Canadian film personalities as Chalmers Adams, Ron Anger, John Boundy, Peter Brigg, Clive Denton, Bob Fothergill, Bruce Martin, Joe Medjuck, Don Owen, Gerald Pratley, and Marita Robinson) is seeking to prove to the public that Canadian film-makers are definitely no amateurs, and that their films can easily stand up to the best from any other country.

On display were Norman McLaren's Opening Speech; Martin Lavut's recent Canadian Film Award-winning At Home; John Straiton's Animals In Motion; When Kappa Kappa Gamma Visited Ontario, a film devised from a collection of Canadian movies viewing Toronto and Muskoka in the early 1920's; Claude Jutra's Rouli Roulant; the Toronto premire of the Norman McLaren-Rene Jodoin film, Spheres; David Troster's The Spell That Comes After; Don Shebib's Good Times, Bad Times; several National Film Board anti-smoking trailers executed by Grant Munro; Don Owen's Notes For A Film About Donna And Gail; Ryan Larkin's Academy Award nominee, Walking, and the NFB/CBC co-production, Waiting For Caroline, directed by Ron Kelly.

More Canadian film shows are being planned for the St. Lawrence Centre, but exhibitors who are interested in playing some of the best Canadian shorts and features should contact any National Film Board office, Film Canada (1 Charles St., Toronto) or The Canadian Film-Makers' Distribution Centre (341 Bloor St. West, Toronto).



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Atlanta Film Festival to be held June 19-27

The third annual Atlanta International Film Festival has been set for Friday, June 19 through Saturday, June 27. Last year, 813 films were received from 32 nations, and over 7,000 people attended the screenings. Closing date for entries is April 1. This year, the Atlanta Festival is opening all student films to competition, with no entry fee. Cash grants and awards will be made. Make any inquiries to J. Hunter Todd, executive producer, Atlanta International Film Festival, Drawer 13258 K, Atlanta, Georgia, 30329.

Our Business

(Continued from Page 1)

not necessarily sell tickets but they will help a new film get off the ground. Thereafter, word of mouth will either help it to soar aloft or bomb it to the ground.

Our business has always existed on the star system. Unfortunately, bankers and film financiers have in the past put such stress on star names that prices skyrocketed beyond any reasonable value.

Established players, or stars if you like, will generally help a film and they should, therefore, receive more compensation than an unknown. However, a problem is created when stars, usually through their agents, start to demand astronomical figures thereby inflating the cost of production.

We vote for the star system, but on a proper and viable basis. We know of many films which have been aided in the selling of tickets because of a certain star and conversely; we know of some which have failed to sell tickets because their casting included certain names. However, as a rule of thumb, we need stars in our business and let's keep the producers apprised of this.

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Editor: ED HOCURA

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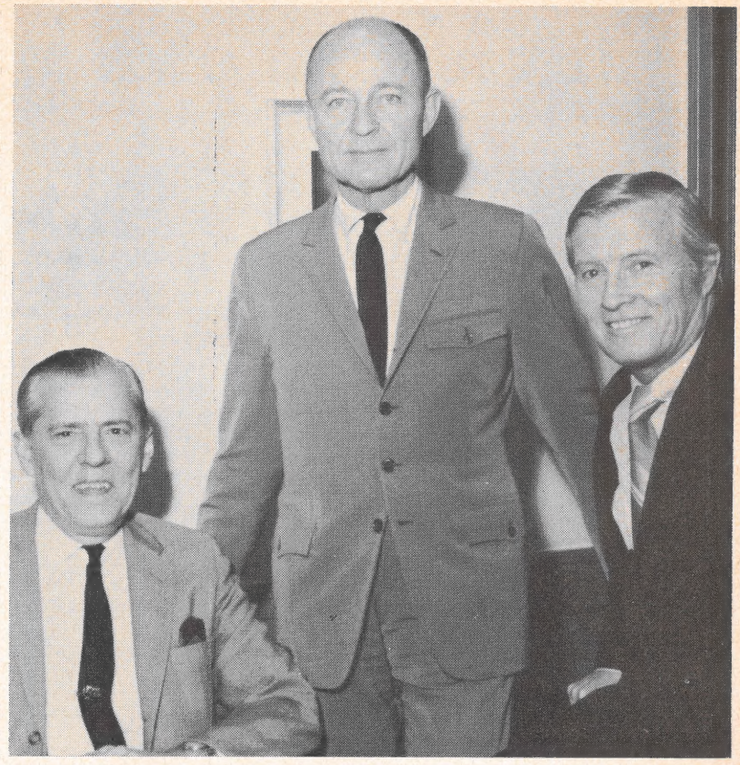
IT'S MY BAG

By Ed Hocura

To hear **Frank McCarthy** tell it, **George C. Scott** was not his original choice to play the controversial U.S. Army General in **Patton.** McCarthy, who served under **General George Marshall** in the Second World War, spent a couple of days in **Toronto** recently beating the publicity drums for the **20th Century-Fox** war film which will have its **Canadian Premiere** at the **University** on **March 11.** McCarthy revealed that it took almost 20 years for the film biography of **General George Patton** to reach the screen. "In the beginning, **Spencer Tracy** was my first choice, but because of objections from the U.S. Army and the Patton family it took me years to convince everyone that the Patton story was in public domain. I then switched from Tracy to **Burt Lancaster** because I wanted a younger actor. But when I was finally given the go-ahead by the Zanucks, I settled for **George C. Scott."** McCarthy joined **20th Century-Fox** following his stint in the U.S. Army, produced two pictures **(Decision Before Dawn** and **Sailor of The Kings)** and spent the ensuing years as a studio executive. He returned to producing with **A Guide For The Married Man,** the first American film to be released with an "M" rating. "After that I settled down to preparing **Patton,** which finally got underway in Spain in January, 1969. I won't deny that I wasn't more than a little disappointed that the studio didn't release **Patton** in time to qualify for the **Academy Awards.** But they didn't want my film to overshadow **Hello, Dolly."** Faced with rave reviews from the New York film critics, but mixed reviews from **Time** and **Newsweek,** McCarthy discovered to his surprise that he overlooked television as a selling point. "Right from the time he saw the film, **Johnny Carson** told his audience how much he enjoyed it. He invited **George C. Scott** to be his guest on two different occasions, and Carson's enthusiasm for the film made a noticeable impact on ticket sales. I don't think I'm over-estimating when I say that the boost we got from Carson will be worth three million dollars at the boxoffice." McCarthy is still miffed over **20th Century-Fox's** decision to shelve **Tom Swift,** which he had budgeted as a $15 million roadshow attraction. "I disagree with their thinking that this film was too big a risk in today's market. I believe that the enormous audience that turned out to see **'The Sound of Music'** are still out there, and they will come out to see something special. But I have been told that **Tom Swift** will only be considered as a future project if it can be redesigned to fit a smaller budget. I don't know if it can be done, but I'm sure going to give it one helluva try." Once all the various premieres for **Patton** are launched in the U.S., McCarthy plans to devote all his time preparing a new concept for **Tom Swift.** He spent almost a million dollars on the building of a special airship for the film, which today is gathering dust in a Kansas aircraft plant.

★ ★ ★

THE BIG, BAD PRESS: **Paramount** and **20th Century-Fox** had little to cheer about when **Toronto Star** reviewers had unkind things to say about two major films slated to have their Canadian premieres in March. Which again brings up the problem of inviting film critics to advance critics, and expecting them to hold off publishing their reviews until the films open. Both **The Adventurers** and **Patton** received unflattering reviews from **Toronto Star** critics **Dorothy Mikos** and **Jim Beebe,** and needless to say both **Paramount** and **20th Century-Fox** were more than upset in seeing the reviews published before they mounted their advance publicity campaigns. **The Adventurers** was previewed for members of the news media aboard a TWA jet giant on its inaugural flight from New York to Los Angeles; **Patton** was previewed at Toronto's Nortown Theatre, and could not be considered as a private screening since it was open to people from all walks of life. In both cases, the **Toronto Star** did not feel they were breaking their agreement with distributors and exhibitors that advance reviews would not be published for films seen by their reviewers in screening rooms. The paper contends that since people other than film critics were invited to see these films, printing the reviews was in keeping with reporting things as they happen. Which, in my estimation, was their right to do. Any distributor who invites the press on a publicity junket or a public preview has no reason to expect that a film critic will hold off publishing a review until a particular film begins its regular engagement. And **Paramount** and **20th Century-Fox** have no recourse in feeling that the **Toronto Star** should have held back the reviews on **The Adventurers** and **Patton.** What happened will happen again, and distributors will have to face up to it. But are two unflattering reviews from such a powerful newspaper as the **Toronto Star** cause for concern for **Paramount** and **20th Century-Fox?** Only if they underestimate the paying public's desire to see two films that could emerge as big moneymakers. Even if every film critic in the country pans **The Adventurers,** the phenomenal success of the novel by **Harold Robbins** has given the film a pre-sold guarantee that thousands of readers of the book want to see it. As for **Patton,** this controversial war movie may appear to be a boxoffice risk with its all-male cast but it could turn out to be a big winner. The boxoffice fates of **The Adventurers** and **Patton** lies with the paying public. Unflattering reviews from a major Canadian newspaper, I feel, are nothing to worry about. But if **Paramount** and **20th Century-Fox** feel they are, we'll just have to wait and see what happens when **The Adventurers** and **Patton** open in Toronto theatres.



A distinguished guest at the preview of Patton in Toronto was U.S. Consul General Alan Moreland, left, shown above with producer Frank McCarthy and Victor Beattie, Canadian general manager for 20th Century-Fox Corp. Ltd.

American war veterans Forrest Monner, Bob Wolfe, Allan Pohn and Andy Krestel, all living in Toronto, gave their seal of approval to Frank McCarthy, right, producer of Patton, after they attended a preview of the war film which will have its Canadian Premiere at the University Theatre on March 11.

(Photos by Len Bishop)

movie reviews

By GARY TOPP

The Molly Maguires

Pennsylvania, 1876. The Molly Maguires were an underground (in the very true sense of the word) terrorist outfit dedicated to the overthrow of the white society ruling that state's coal mines and miners. The laborers were also white. But unfortunately, they were white, Irish Catholic immigrants who had come to the United States not necessarily for great success, but certainly for a good life. The rebels sought to gain this goal.

Paramount's The Molly Maguires tells the story of an informer, played by actor/singer Richard Harris, who is hired by 'the establishment' to join the ranks of the militants for the purpose of detecting the ring-leaders.

Harris plays his part exceptionally well, as the down-and-out soul who realizes his circumstances and takes full advantage of fate in order to climb the ladder. He understands all too well that violence begets violence. On the other side of the fence, the rebel leader, portrayed with surprising strength by Sean Connery, sees no alternative to revolutionary violence when everything else is hopeless.

There is definite morality involved in this movie — the morality of class struggle, leading to painful slum life, leading to militancy aimed for a "power to the people", a needed change. It seems that in those days, terrorism was the only way that the desperate, middle-aged miners could possibly gain anything from their selfish employers. The thoughts of today's youth are not much different, and it is perhaps this parallel that makes The Molly Maguires so relevant.

The Molly Maguires is not a perfect movie but there are enough virtues to compensate for all of its failings. It's not really new for the oppressed peoples of the world to take to the streets with guns. Nowadays, the majority of political statement movies talk about, and tend to be in favor of, revolution. Some succeed and some do not. The Molly Maguires examines the subject, and rationally and subtlely delivers the message. There's no flash and the story is history by nearly 100 years. Hopefully though, today's audiences will support the film, even though the protagonists do not ride motorcycles or smoke dope.

★ ★ ★

The Damned

Films have generally moved towards a far greater realism. This new look tended to establish itself in the early 1940's, appearing mainly in the European cinema and gradually taking its place in that of the United States. Luchino Visconti, from Italy, was one of the forerunners to produce a wholly realistic film. With such motion pictures as Rocco and His Brothers, The Leopard and The Stranger, Visconti helped lead this powerful new movement of social criticism in the cinema.

Visconti's most recent venture, The Damned (distributed by Warner Bros.), is playing to overwhelming audiences, making it perhaps his greatest success financially. It is a shame, however, that The Damned turns out to be nothing more than an over-done, Hollywood-style historical spectacular.

The title refers to the entire Nazi experience in pre-war Germany during the early 1930's and to the Von Essenbeck family in particular, an extremely powerful but doomed family which owned a vast steelworks empire in that country. It appears obvious that Visconti had hoped to present an allegory of the evils of Nazi Germany at the beginning of that period, but what he offers is a tedious domestic melodrama concerning a household of deviates.

What I found interesting about The Damned was the gloomy images, created by the director, of the various stages of the German situation. A marvellous screenplay miraculously carries across Visconti's visions of terror and confusion. Unfortunately, everything else fails.

The characterizations, revealing such personality flaws as cowardice, back-stabbing, sadism, and numerous sexual perversions, are not at all convincing, and this is a pity because Visconti has assembled together quite an exciting troupe. The mixture of German accented English with authentic German (with and without subtitles) dialogue becomes very distracting after a while, giving an unreal air to the entire production. The photography is definitely a joke. Composed almost exclusively of zooms, in and out, it was so pretentious that I finally made up my mind that everyone else is wrong. Andy Warhol does have tremendous talent with his camera.

The Damned runs much too long — approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes — and what Visconti eventually produces is a dull historical account of an era in Germany when "anything can happen" and where "enormous interests are at stake". I could have slept through it all, but I just wasn't tired!

Looking Ahead

Peter Sellers has been signed to star opposite Academy Award-nominee **Goldie Hawn** in **There's a Girl in My Soup,** which will be produced by John and Roy Boulting and directed by the latter. The Frankovich production for **Columbia Pictures** release which will be made in association with British Lion, begins filming in England in March.

Unique film project at Sir George Williams

The Conservatory of Cinematographic Art of Sir George Williams University was created in January, 1968, by its present director, Dr. Serge Losique, in order to increase the tremendous interest in film as an art form. Now in full swing, the conservatory presents specialized film programs as well as lectures by noted film-makers and historians.

The first Canadian Student Film Festival, organized in September, 1969, highlighted films from across Canada, and due to the tremendous success of the event, will be held annually.

A film library consisting of 2,000 films with an additional 300 on loan from the Cinématheque Française in Paris has been created. Already the collection has attracted the interest of many other institutions to which it has loaned movies for special showings.

The conservatory is a member of the World Union of Film Museums and is the only Canadian correspondent of the two leading museums of cinema in the world — Cinématheque Française (of which Henri Langlois, its director, travels from Paris every two weeks in order to lecture and to stimulate public movie showings) and the George Eastman House.

Recently, a D. W. Griffith festival was presented at the university. Nine rarely seen films were screened, including those in which W. C. Fields, Walter Huston and Tyrone Power played their earliest roles for the pioneer American director.

Any donations in support of this unique film project should be forwarded to Sir George Williams University, 1435 Drummond St., Montreal 107, Quebec.

El Weirdo will be the first of **Woody Allen's** three films to be made for **United Artists** by Jack Rollins-Charles H. Joffee Productions. Allen will also direct and write the film.

* * *

Beverly Todd has been signed to co-star opposite **Sidney Poitier** in **Kane,** which Poitier's E & R Productions Corp. will film for **Columbia Pictures.**

The film marks the fourth teaming of Miss Todd and Poitier which began when he directed her on Broadway in Carry Me Back to Morningside Heights. They then appeared together in the motion pictures, The Lost Man and the recently completed They Call Me Mister Tibbs.

* * *

Michael Douglas has been signed to star in **Summertree,** the motion picture version of the hit off-Broadway play to be filmed by **Kirk Douglas' Bryna Company** and directed by **Anthony Newley** for **Columbia Pictures.**

Douglas portrays a young soldier in Viet Nam in the new film which is scheduled to begin production on March 16 on location in California.

* * *

Ruth Gordon has been signed for Where's Poppa?, starring **George Segal.** Miss Gordon will be seen as an octogenarian widow who is constantly asking her son, Where's Poppa?

The picture is based on the forthcoming novel by Robert Klane and will be directed by **Carl Reiner** as a Jarry Tokofsky-Marvin Worth Production. It will be released by **United Artists.**

FP hosts free movie show for Tor. schools

A special morning showing of Hansel and Gretel was held Feb. 28 in Toronto's 3,200-seat Imperial Theatre where pupils and teachers from nine downtown elementary schools were the invited guests of Famous Players Canadian Corp. The free showing was organized by the company as a community relations project, working closely with the Neighborhood Youth Corps, Toronto Education Encouragement Inc. and the Metro Toronto Social Planning Council.